



Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

www.dzanga-sangha.org



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Newsletter March 2024

DSPA receives funds from



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K Lisa Yang





Wildlife

Latona II is a 45-years old elephant female who visits Dzanga Bai very frequently. She was first identified in 1994 as part of the Latona family, and sired four known offspring between the years 2000 and 2019.

Showing clear signs of pregnancy, she was last seen in January 2023. Two months later she visited the clearing again, with her newborn infant male, Latona II(VI).



Latona II nursing her newborn while the older sibling is staying close. © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF.



Latona II(VI), only a few days old. © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF.



A 3-months old female buffalo passed away in the clearing on March 20th. This individual had been previously observed presenting difficulties to walk due to a malformation of her hooves, similar to a case observed in 2023. The little buffalo most probably suffered a physical shock from the elephants and died due to the injuries caused. The necropsy was performed a day after her death.



Infant buffalo in March 2024. © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF.



The carcass of the infant buffalo inspected by an adult male elephant. © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF



Andrea Sotomayor has been recruited as head of the Primate Habituation Program, to continue with the work of gorilla habituation that he performed for 8 months as a volunteer.

A study about the death of one silverback that passed away last year has been published. Our habituated silverback Mata died when falling from a tree, but for Mayele the causes were not clear back in the day. A deeper investigation on his injuries suggest that the injuries observed correspond to a fight with another male. Silverbacks can get into physical confrontation within the sexual selection context, harming other males and even causing their death.



The complete article can be found at this link, but it has also been published in several magazines such as Le Figaro, Geo and Science et Avenir.

[https://www.cell.com/iscience/fulltext/S2589-0042\(24\)00658-8?returnURL=https%3A%2F%2Flinkinghub.elsevier.com%2Fretrieve%2Fpii%2FS2589004224006588%3Fshowall%3Dtrue#secsectitle0145](https://www.cell.com/iscience/fulltext/S2589-0042(24)00658-8?returnURL=https%3A%2F%2Flinkinghub.elsevier.com%2Fretrieve%2Fpii%2FS2589004224006588%3Fshowall%3Dtrue#secsectitle0145)

<https://www.geo.fr/animaux/les-gorilles-se-livrent-a-des-combats-mortels-entre-groupes-rivaux-en-afrique-de-l-ouest-219413>

<https://www.lefigaro.fr/sciences/les-gorilles-de-l-ouest-se-livrent-des-combats-a-mort-revele-une-etude-20240329>

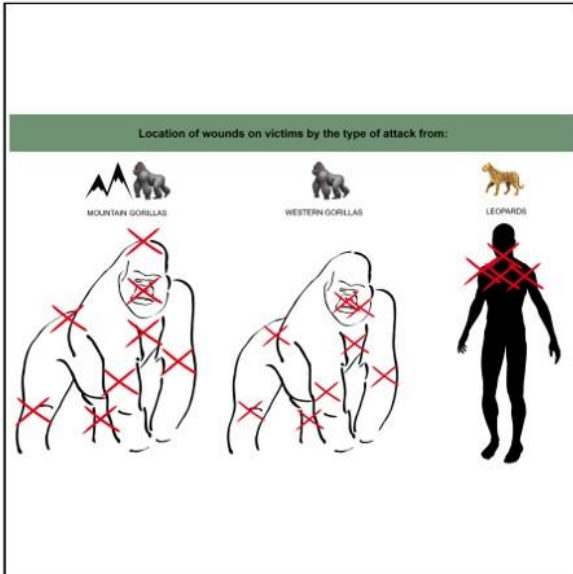
https://www.sciencesetavenir.fr/animaux/primates/shelly-masi-jusqu-a-present-aucune-agression-mortelle-entre-gorilles-de-l-ouest-n-avait-ete-consignee_177573



Article

Lethal combats in the forest among wild western gorillas

Location of wounds on victims by the type of attack from:



Hugo Potel, Frédéric Stéphane Niatou Singa, Chloé Cipolletta, ..., Paolo Strampelli, Philipp Henschel, Shelly Masi

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Highlights

We show lethal aggressions in western gorillas as predicted by sexual selection

Injury pattern from gorilla and leopard attacks differ for wound types and location

Both one- and multi-male society favor the evolution of violent encounters

Male age and multiple males in groups instead influence their frequency






In a mission to visit the research projects managed by the K. Lisa Yang Center for Conservation Bioacoustics in the Sangha Trinational area, representatives of Cornell University spend some days at Dzanga-Sangha and in the neighboring Nouabale-Ndoki NP. Daniela Hedwig, project leader of the Elephant Listening Project, Laurel Symes, assistant director of the Yang Center, and Ian Owens, director of the Cornell Lab, got an insight into the field activities of the Dzanga Forest Elephant Project. In an interest to broaden the support of Cornell University to the DSPA, they met with the responsible of the park management. The Cornell Lab donated six pairs of high-quality binoculars to the Club of Friends for Nature that performs activities for children in collaboration with the Dzanga Forest Elephant Project to support the educational activities such as birding and bai visits. Their visit is appreciated and strengthens the bond with Cornell University.



From left to right: Laurel Symes, Mireille Mozouta, Michael Bounqalo, Bertin Ngbonga, Daniela Hedwig, Isidore Yankoisie, Jean Mabiawe and Ian Owens at Dzanga Bai. The project manager, Ivonne Kienast, is behind the camera. ©ELP for the Yang Center/WWF.

Dzanga Bai data collected in collaboration with the Elephant Listening Project: presence of mammals at the clearing based on the number of individuals counted every 30 minutes from 11:00 to 16:30 each day of the month.

Species	Minimum	Average	Maximum
	25	90	191
	0	8	35
	0	5	11



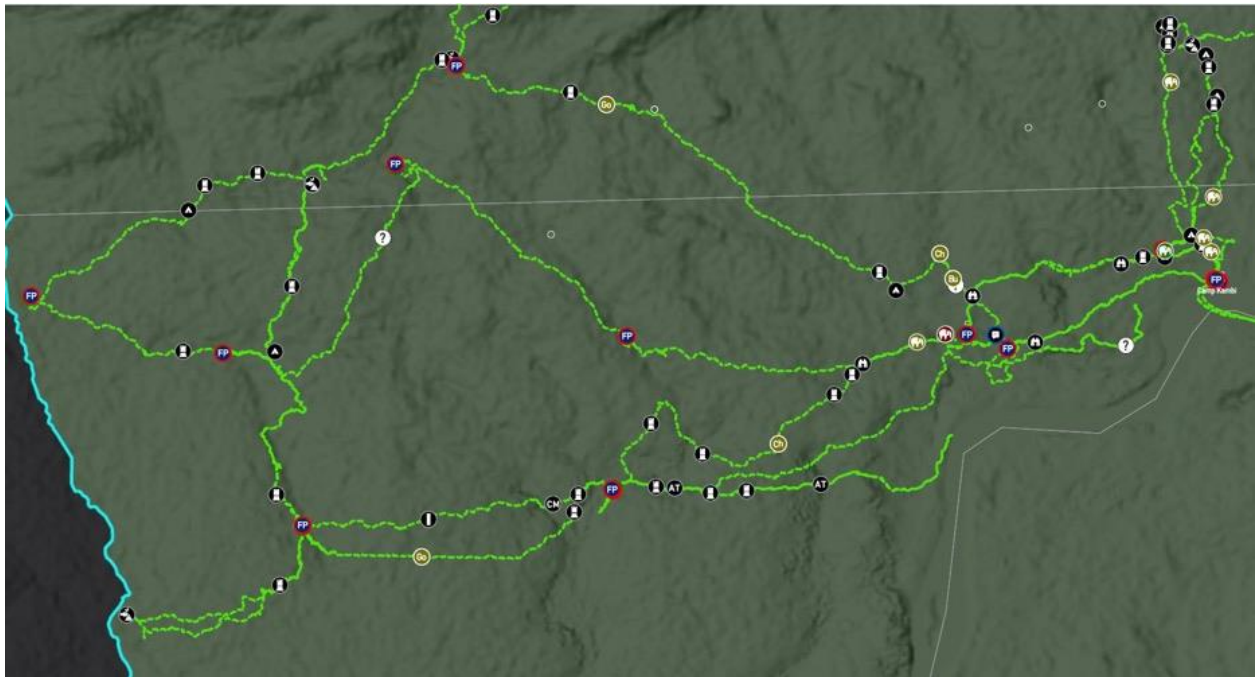
Antipoaching

Previously, with the aim of supporting the drafting of the Community Hunting Zone (ZCC) Management Plan, we had carried out participatory mapping of the different sectors of the ZCC and the reserve bordering the ZCC.

This mission allowed us to list the sectors of the ZCC, the reserve and the park and the most frequently associated human pressures. The mapping provided the Protection and Surveillance department and ADLAC members with a rapid assessment of all pressures within this area, active and inactive trap lines, recent cartridges and active hunting camps.

We have now relaunched this activity in the western sector of the Special Reserve in collaboration with ADLAC.

These missions are led by ecoguard team leaders accompanied by ADLAC hunters for a period of 10 days per mission in order to collect data on hunting activities in the given sectors.



Preliminary results from field data collection

From March 26th to 27th, 2024, a team from the DSPA Protection and Surveillance Department took part in the 35th meeting of the TNS park wardens, organized in Bomassa (Rep. of Congo) by the PNPN, Congolese segment of the TNS. The participants of the meeting were the park wardens of the three protected areas of the TNS, as well as their directors, technical advisors and other field collaborators.

One of the remarkable points that took place during the meeting was the handover between Mr. KINGA Davy (Nouabale Ndoki National Park), outgoing Brigade Chief and Mr. KEDE Constant Aimé (LOBEKE National Park), incoming Brigade Chief of the BLAB -TNS. The Brigade Chief Mr KEDE Constant Aimé was inducted into his new position.

41 regular patrols were conducted involving 86 rangers. In total 1673 Rangers/days. 1.958km were traveled on foot.

This resulted in the seizure of 4 manufactured 12-gauge firearms, and 16 homemade firearms, with 43 ammunitions. 99 kg of illegal wild meat were seized, and 755 metal snares were dismantled.

1 elephant carcass was found and 1 suspect arrested.

Community Conservation

The new head of the community development department has arrived in Bayanga this month. From now on we are going to try to involve the population much more in all the activities and objectives of DS.

Ndima Kali continued their routine activities in several villages with workshops for the transmission of traditional knowledge to young people. A total of 415 young people took part in the cultural activities of Ndima-Kali.



Young Baaka identifying medicinal plants © Martial Betoulet

The first awareness meetings with a view to launching the agricultural campaign began at the end of March in 8 villages bordering the APDS. 92 Bilo beneficiaries were identified for the plots of family food crop fields, for a total of approximately 97,700m² of land to be converted into crop fields. Ba'aka beneficiaries are still being identified.

A young Baaka got killed by an elephant this month. Apparently, a family of elephants arrived close to the town of Moussapola and when trying to chase the family away, a female who had a calf charged the people and deadly injured the young Baaka.

We distributed school supplies in 32 primary schools and 2 high schools, prioritizing children with disabilities (284). In total 1480 students benefited from the activities. The beneficiaries were provided with a prize consisting of: a backpack, notebooks, an academic box, pens, a graduated ruler, grid sheets, colored pencils, an eraser, grey pencils, notebook covers, chalk and a slate.

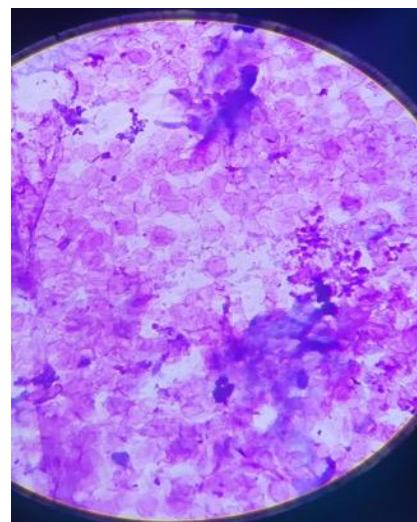


Students with their new school kits © Amandine Toumbou

Malaria remains a major public health problem in the Central African Republic and the diagnosis of this disease by thick smear remains the Gold Standard of the World Health Organization (WHO). With the support of our partner, the Helmholtz Institute for One Health (HIOH), we are already able to do malaria diagnostic tests using the Giemsa-stained thick drop. The method was already carried out on a few blood samples taken.



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Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients

Structure	Number of patients
Monasao Health Post	464
Belemboke Health Post	321
Total	785

Park Administration

Pierre PROCES and Thomas RABEIL came to Dzanga in early March as technical assistants to the EU (AGRECO) to analyze and plan the EU's continued support to Dzanga Sangha under the NaturAfrica initiative.



© Christian Bassoum

A solar technician has come to work alongside our expert at the SMA and Victron solar plants in Dzanga Sangha. They have carried out a general maintenance inspection, and replaced some materials to make them operate at their maximum capacity.

They have also carried out a review of the solar power plant at the Belemboke hospital.

In turn, CSSS solar technicians have come to begin work on the installation of the new solar power plant that will provide electricity to the city of Bayanga.



The CSSS team in Bayanga © Jean Philippe Denruyter



Tourism and Marketing

March has been a very busy month, and due to the high occupancy, we had to reject some of the bookings. We received 76 visitors who spend a sum of 305 nights at Dzanga-Sangha. The visitors and their accompanying children enjoyed the fauna and spent time interacting with local children and sharing the local culture. All photos © Nuria Ortega





Arrivals and departures



Amandine Toumbou, has joined us as responsible of the Community Conservation Department. She has great experience in the region and has started her work strongly organizing many activities concerning the community.

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Sarah-Matio Elangwe Milo from the Helmholtz Institute for One Health in Germany, has come to Bayanga for a preliminary study of the cohort focused on human health as part of the long-term One Health surveillance project within the Protected Areas of Dzanga Sangha.

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- *This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of WWF CAR and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*